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Summit lauds progress in children's vaccines

The Kyoto summit of the world's leading vaccine experts and policy-makers recently concluded with a sweeping declaration that called for substantial new funds to ensure an adequate supply of high-quality vaccines to eradicate polio worldwide, eliminate tetanus in the newborn, and control measles. Fund-raising efforts will also seek to expand research on vaccines to protect children from several diseases simultaneously.

Representatives from 35 nations attended the Kyoto meeting. The Declaration of Kyoto, the first consensus document of the three-year old Children's Vaccine Initiative (CVI), was affirmed by CVI's sponsoring organizations — the Rockefeller Foundation, UNDP, UNICEF, the World Bank and WHO.

The CVI is an informal association of public and private groups dedicated to helping the world community to accelerate and apply advances in the science, development, manufacture and efficient delivery of new and better vaccines for the world's children.

It was launched in response to the Declaration of New York, made shortly before the World Summit for Children in 1990, which called for a global commitment to the production and delivery of children's vaccines that provide lasting protection against a wide range of diseases, are simple to administer and are affordable.

The CVI relies heavily on vaccine research carried out by the WHO/UNDP Programme for Vaccine Development, and on the operations and experience of the global Expanded Programme on Immunization spearheaded by UNICEF and WHO.

The ultimate goal calls for a single oral vaccine which can be given earlier in life, requires one or two rather than multiple doses, keeps its potency in tropical temperatures, can be given in the form of cocktails of several vaccines, and will be affordable. The immediate objectives of the CVI are:

- to facilitate provision of an adequate supply of affordable, safe and effective vaccines against important infectious diseases;
- to accelerate the development and production of improved and new vaccines;
- to simplify the complex logistics of vaccine delivery.

The Kyoto agreement urges rapid implementation of vaccine self-sufficiency programmes, and calls for improving the quality of vaccines produced in developing countries through the establishment of an international quality control system.

The Declaration of Kyoto explicitly calls for at least US$300 million in additional funds by the year 2000. Mrs. Kayoko Hosokawa, wife of the Japanese Prime Minister, agreed at the meeting to provide the leadership in Japan to solicit funds from private and voluntary organizations.

J. Abcede / UN

The Kyoto agreement calls for an international quality control system for vaccines.

Specific advances since CVI's inception include the new combination DTP-Hib and DTP-Hepatitis B vaccines. CVI has directed new research to meet children's vaccine needs, a departure from the outmoded strategy of trying to fit already available vaccines into an established immunization schedule.

In a critical change, vaccines are evolving to become strategic commodities, so that improving their quality and supply becomes a priority for all countries as a cost-effective contribution to the health and development of the world's children.

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R. Massey / UNDP

One aim of the Education Summit is to remove the disparity between male and female literacy before the year 2000.

Freeze arms, spend on education — summit parley urged

Governments should freeze their military expenditures and redirect their overseas development assistance in order to meet the world's basic education needs, said Mahbub ul Haq, Special Adviser to UNDP's Administrator. He spoke to a panel at the Education for All Summit of the world's nine high-population developing countries, held last week in New Delhi.

Dr. Haq said that each country must recognize that Education for All is a national priority, and responsibility for education should be spread much more broadly. "Gove nments with large populations cannot hope to produce an education system responsive to local needs through some rigid central master plan," he said. Dr. Haq added that governments have a valuable partner in NGOs and should also encourage participation from local communities. The international gathering brought together leaders from Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria and Pakistan to address the issue of education as a fundamental human right, and as a means for slowing population growth rates, stimulating development and ensuring child survival.

Dr. Haq said that the "key focus of future efforts must be on education for girls," and that "removing the existing gender disparities in education will mean that, over the next seven years, for every additional boy we will have to enrol three additional girls."

Dr. Haq added that the pay-off could be enormous, because women "would start to gain the rights and opportunities to which they are entitled." There would be gains to society as a whole, too, because women's "education can be the most powerful contraceptive. Population growth could be profoundly affected if women were better educated and had the confidence and knowledge to make their own choices on family size," he said.

To finance education needs, Dr. Haq urged a redirection of existing resources. "If all nine summit countries agree to freeze their military expenditure and subsequently reduce it by one per cent for seven years, this would cumulatively provide about $18 billion which could be directed to meeting basic learning needs," he said. He urged countries to agree that "at least half of their existing educational assistance should be earmarked for primary education."

Dr. Haq concluded by stating that "Education for all is finally the business of all — of the entire societies, of all the donors, of every policy-maker anywhere."

Republic of Korea plans attack on poverty

UNDP has been supporting research on the nature of poverty in Korea, which will culminate in a Korean model for an anti-poverty programme. The Korean Development Institute, which advises the government on economic and social policies, conducted the research, including comparative analyses of poverty alleviation policies in other countries. The aim is to develop a full-scale policy plan to address poverty issues at the national level in Korea.

A series of workshops and meetings were held to exchange information on various government initiatives addressing poverty alleviation. Research papers were presented on anti-poverty programmes in Germany, Japan, Sweden, the United States and the Republic of Korea itself. A final report of these analytical papers will be published and made available to policy-makers in Korea. Consultative meetings were also held with community leaders.

The long-term aim of these efforts will be to analyze Korea's experience in fighting poverty, distil practical insights for the future, and then make available a relevant Korean model of government and NGO initiatives for policy-makers in Korea and elsewhere.

Preparations underway for the World Summit for Social Development

UNDP is already gearing up for the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, which will bring together world leaders to agree on joint action for alleviating and reducing poverty, expanding productive employment and enhancing social integration. A preparatory meeting for this World Summit will take place in New York from 31 January – 11 February 1994.

If effectively designed, the Summit

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could be an important milestone in rethinking development programmes. During the preparatory process, UNDP's major task will be to assist countries in assessing needs, and framing their own solutions to their social development problems within the context of the Social Summit.

UNDP is strategically placed to be a major substantive contributor to Summit preparations because of its ongoing Human Development Report series, and its country programme focus on sustainable human development. It will produce reports on human development initiatives in numerous countries. In addition, in collaboration with other UN system partners UNDP will conduct in-depth studies in three areas in order to mobilize the research community around Summit issues: macro-economic policies and employment, the patterns and causes of social exclusion, and social development in the 1990s.

UNDP will also help foster broad involvement of non-governmental organizations in all of the Summit preparations. For example, it will work closely with NGOs in preparing its studies on country experiences with human development initiatives, and will sponsor various workshops and meetings with governmental and non-governmental organizations during the period leading up to the Summit.

New video on development implications of HIV and AIDS

HIV and AIDS: Preventing the Worst, a new 27-minute video that highlights the development impact of HIV and AIDS in developing countries has just been released by UNDP's Division of Public Affairs (DPA). Shot in Zambia and India, the video captures the feelings and frustrations of people who are coping with the consequences of HIV infection and AIDS. In Zambia, there are views of the devastation that the loss of workers, too ill to carry on, has caused in agriculture, copper mining and banking. In India, community development workers share the approaches they are taking to halt the growing incidence of infection, which threatens similar grave effects.

Suitable for general audiences, the video was produced for DPA by the London-based Television Trust for the Environment. To obtain a VHS copy in English (NTSC, PAL, SECAM) send a $25 cheque or money order, drawn on a US bank, to: UNDP/DPA, 1 United Nations Plaza, Room DC1-1922, New York, NY 10017, USA. French and Spanish available in early 1994.

Central American officials receive offers of support for new approaches to development

With international help, Central America can "provide a model for conflict resolution that consolidates peace and democracy by means of comprehensive development," said foreign ministers and other high-ranking Central American officials in a statement issued during a meeting convened by UNDP at UN headquarters last month. But the officials also warned that care must be taken not to return to the violence and instability that marked the region until recently. Donors offered further support while calling for "new and imaginative means of development cooperation."

The purpose of the International Technical Meeting on Central America, which brought together the officials of Central America with donors and UN agencies, was to provide an opportunity for further consultations between the Central American countries and the International Community on the means to consolidate peace in the region and the prospects for international cooperation.

After an opening statement by James Gustave Speth, the Administrator of UNDP, the Central American representatives addressed problems and obstacles that must be overcome to consolidate peace in the region. They mentioned that in spite of progress achieved in establishing peace and building democracy in recent years, there is an overwhelming need to avoid returning to past situations of violence and instability. They also underlined that Central America "offers the necessary conditions to establish an interdependent relationship between a program for peace and an agenda for development".

Donor countries and international organizations and agencies expressed their support for the Central American efforts towards peace consolidation. They mentioned the support they had provided and are willing to continue providing to Central America. Strengthening of democratic institutions, human rights and extreme poverty were mentioned among areas for cooperation.

Approved projects

(all projects subject to modification; sums quoted in US dollars)

Argentina — Support to the National Programme for Rehabilitation of Health Infrastructure — UNDP will provide technical assistance for the design and monitoring of the construction of hospitals and health centres in four provinces. Technical support will also be provided for the preparation of the federal health plan, including upgrading the human resource base of the provincial health system.

Government cost-sharing: $6,661,650. Source of funds will be the World Bank. The project will provide experts in the fields of health, administration, informatics, hospital architecture, engineering, accounting, and legal advisory services. Funds will also be used for equipment

and training. Government executed and implemented by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, and the Pan-american Health Organization. (ARG/93/038)

Colombia — Support for preparation of the Master Plan for the Development of Civil Aviation — UNDP will help design a master plan for the development of the Civil Aviation Administrative Department (DAAC). Assistance will be provided to upgrade airport services, modernize DAAC's technology, establish training and certification of technical personnel, improve infrastructure, and plan programmes for recruitment of DAAC staff.

Government cost-sharing: $23,250,000. Funds will finance consultants in the areas of civil aviation, security, engineering and communications systems. Government executed and implemented by the International Civil Aviation Organization. (COL/93/018)

Dominican Republic — Conservation and Management of Biodiversity in the Coastal Zone of the Dominican Republic — Practical management plans are urgently needed to ensure survival of the country's unique biodiversity. This project will target the Jaragua and the Samana Bay Region to strengthen the capacities of the government, NGOs and local communities to manage biodiversity of these areas. A research programme will be established for coastal zone management, sustainable resource development and biodiversity conservation. In addition, a proposed coastal zone management policy for the country will be devised.

UNDP contribution: $3 million. Funds will finance environmental planning experts. Executed by the Sub-secretariat for Natural Resources and implemented by relevant NGOs. (DOM/92/G31)

Panama — Rural Development of Indigenous Population: Ngobe-Bugle — The indigenous communities of the Ngobe-Bugle have high infant mortality rates, high illiteracy rates, poor housing conditions, and high incidents of slash-and-burn cultivation. Through training, workshops, and the creation of development centres, UNDP will help improve the income and living conditions of one of the most vulnerable groups in Panama.

Government cost-sharing: $6,664,858. UNDP contribution: $147,500. Funds will be used for experts, training and equipment. Government executed. Implemented by the Social Emergency Fund. (PAN/93/005)

Peru — National Privatization Programme — UNDP will provide support for establishing methods and building managerial and technical expertise for the country's privatization process, including transfer of the property of 148 state enterprises to the private sector. In addition, vocational training will be conducted for workers displaced by privatization.

UNDP contribution: $1,000,000. Government cost-sharing: $67,000,000. UNIDO: $250,000. Government-executed by the Private Investment Promotion Committee (COPRI). (PER/92/042)

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